AN ACCOUNT OF THE Late Revolution IN NEW-ENGLAND.

Together with the Declaration of the Gentlemen, Merchants, and Inhabitants of *Boston*, and the Countrey adjacent, *April* 18. 1689.

Written by Mr. Nathaniel Byfield, a Merchant of Bristol in New England, to his Friends in LONDON.

LICENSED, June 27. 1689. *J. Fraser.*

GENTLEMEN,

HAve being an opportunity of sending for *London*, by a Vessel that loaded at *Long Island*, and for want of a Wind put in here; and not knowing that there will be the like from this Countrey suddenly, I am willing to give you some brief Account of the most remarkable things that have happed here within this Fortnight last past; concluding that till about that time, you will have received per *Carter*, a full Account of the Management of Affairs here. Upon the *Eighteenth* Instant, about eight of the Clock in the Morning, in *Boston*, it was reported at the South end of the Town, That at the North end they were all in Arms; and the like report was at the North end, respecting the South end: Whereupon Captain *John George* was immediately seized, and about nine of the Clock the Drums beat through the Town; and an Ensign was set up upon the Beacon. Then Mr: *Bradstreet*, Mr: *Danforth*, Major *Richards*, Dr: *Cooke*, and Mr: *Addington* &c. were brought to the Council-House by a Company of Soldiers under the Command of Captain *Hill*. The mean while the People in Arms did take up and put into Goal, Justice *Bullivant*, Justice *Foxcroft*, Mr: *Randoll*, Sheriff *Sherlock*, Capt: *Townsend*, Captain *White*, *Farewel*, *Broadbent*, *Crafford*, *Larkin*, *Smith*, and many more; as also *Dorcety* the then Goal-keeper, and put *Scottow* the Brick-layer in his place. About Noon, in the Gallery at the Council-House, was read the Declaration here inclosed. Then a Message was sent to the Fort to Sir *Edmund Andros*, by Mr: *Oliver* and Mr: *Eyres*, signed by the Gentlemen then in the Council-Chamber (which is

is here also Inclosed) to inform him how unsafe he was like to be if he did not deliver up himself, and Fort and Government forthwith, which he was loath to do. By this time, being about two of the Clock (the Lecture being put by) the Town was generally in Arms, and so many of the Countrey came in, that there were Twenty Companies in *Boston*, besides a great many that appeared at *Charles Town* that could not get over (some say Fifteen Hundred). There then came Information to the Soldiers, That a Boat was come from the Frigat that made towards the Fort, which made them haste thither, and came to the Sconce soon after the Boat got thither; And 'tis said that Governor *Andros*, and about half a score Gentlemen, were coming down out of the Fort; but the Boat being seized, wherein were small Arms, Hand-Granadoes, and a quantity of Match, the Governor and the rest went in again; whereupon Mr: *John Nelson*, who was at the Head of the Soldiers, did demand the Fort and the Governor, who was loath to submit to them; but at length did come down, and was with the Gentlemen that were with him, conveyed to the Council-House, where Mr: *Bradstreet* and the rest of the Gentlemen waited to receive him; to whom Mr: *Stoughton* first spake, telling him, he might thank himself for the present disaster that had befallen him *&c.* He was then confined for that night to Mr. *John Usher's* House under strong Guards, and the next day conveyed to the Fort, (where he yet remains, and with him Lieutenant Collonel *Ludget*) which is under the Command of Mr: *John Nelson*; and at the Castle, which is under the Command of Mr: *John Fairweather*, Mr: *West*; Mr: *Graham*, Mr: *Palmer*, and Captain *Ironsyde*. At that time Mr: *Dudley* was out upon the Circuit, and was holding a Court at *Southold* on *Long-Island*. And on the 21st Instant he arrived at *Newport*, where he heard the News. The next day Letters came to him, advising him not to come home; he thereupon went over privatly to Major *Smith's* at *Naraganzett*, and Advice is this day come hither, that yesterday about a dozen young men, most of their own heads, went thither to demand him: and are gone with him down to *Boston*. We have also advice, that on *Friday* last towards evening, Sir *Edmond Andros* did attempt to make an escape in Womens Apparel, and past'd two Guards, and was stopped at the third, being discovered by his Shoes, not having changed them. We are here ready to blame you sometimes, that we have not to this day received advice concerning the great changes in *England*, and in particular how it is like to fare with us here; who do hope and believe that all these things will work for our Good; and that you will not be wanting to promote the Good of a Countrey that stands in such need as *New England* does at this day. The first day of *May*, according to former Usage, is the Election-day at *Road-Island*; and many do say they intend their choice there then. I have not farther to trouble you with at present, but recommending you, and all your affairs with you, to the Direction and Blessing of our most Gracious God: I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your most Humble Servant at Command,

NATHANAEL BYFIELD.

Bristol, *April* 29: 1689.

Through the Goodness of God, there hath been no Blood shed. Nath: Clark *is in* Plymouth Goal, *and* John Smith *in* Goal *here, all waiting for News from* England.

The Declaration of the Gentlemen, Merchants, and Inhabitants of Boston, *and the Countrey adjacent,* April 18. 1689.

§. I. WE have seen more than a decad of Years rolled away since the *English* World had the Discovery of an horrid *Popish Plot*; wherein the bloody *Devotees* of *Rome* had in their Design and Prospect no less than the Extinction of the *Protestant Religion*: Which mighty Work they called *the utter Subduing of a Pestilent Heresie*; wherein (they said) there never were such hopes of Success since the Death of Queen *Mary*, as now in our days. And we were of all men the most insensible, if we should apprehend a Countrey so remarkable for the true Profession and pure Exercise of the Protestant Religion as *New-England* is, wholly unconcerned in the Infamous Plot. To crush and break a Countrey so entirely and signally made up of *Reformed Churches*, and at length to involve it in the miseries of an utter Extirpation, must needs carry even a Supererogation of merit with it among such as were intoxicated with a Bigotry inspired into them by the great *Scarlet whore*.

§. II. To get us within the reach of the desolation desired for us, it was no improper thing that we should first have our *Charter* Vacated, and the hedge which kept us from the wild Beasts of the field, effectually broken down. The accomplishment of this was hastned by the unwearied sollicitations, and slanderous Accusations of a Man, for his *Malice* and *Falshood*, well known unto us all. Our *charter* was with a most injurious pretence (and scarce that) of Law, condemned before it was possible for us to appear at *Westminster* in the legal defence of it; and without a fair leave to answer for our selves, concerning the Crimes falsly laid to our charge, we were put under a *President* and *Council*, without any liberty for an Assembly, which the other *American* Plantations have, by a Commission from his *Majesty*.

§. III. The Commission was as *illegal* for the form of it, as the way of obtaining it was *Malicious* and *unreasonable*: yet we made no Resistance thereunto, as we could easily have done; but chose to give all *mankind* a Demonstration of our being a people sufficiently dutiful and loyal to our King; and this with yet more Satisfaction, because we took pains to make our selves believe as much as ever we could of the Whedle then offer'd to us, That his *Majesty's* desire was no other than the happy encrease and advance of these *Provinces* by their more immediate Dependance on the *Crown* of *England*. And we were convinced of it by the courses immediatly taken to damp and spoil our *Trade*; wherefore decayes and complaints presently filled all the Countrey; while in the meantime neither the Honour nor the Treasure of the King was at all advanced by this new Model of our Affairs, but a considerable Charge added unto the Crown.

§. IV. In little more than half a Year we saw this Commission superseded by another, yet more Absolute and Arbitrary, with which Sir *Edmond Andros* arrived as our Governour; who besides his Power, with the Advice and Consent of his Council, to

make Laws and raise Taxes as he pleased; had also Authority by himself to Muster and Imploy all Persons residing in the Territory as occasion shall serve; and to transfer such Forces to any English Plantation in *America*, as occasion shall require. And several Companies of Souldiers were now brought from *Europe*, to support what was to be imposed upon us, not without repeated Rumours that some hundreds more were intended for us.

§. V. The Government was no sooner in these Hands, but care was taken to load Preferments principally upon such Men as were strangers to, and haters of the People: and every ones Observations hath noted, what Qualifications recommended a Man to publick Offices and Employments, only here and there a *good Man* was used, where others could not easily be had; the Governour himself, with Assertions now and then falling from him, made us Jealous that it would be thought for his Majesties Interest, if this People were removed and another succeeded in their room: And his far-fetch'd Instruments that were growing rich among us, would gravely inform us that it was not for his Majesties Interest that we should thrive. But of all our Oppressors we were chiefly *squeez'd* by a crew of abject Persons, fetched from *New-York*, to be the Tools of the Adversary, standing at our right hand; by these were extraordinary and intolerable Fees exacted from every one upon all occasions, without any Rules but those of their own unsatiable Avarice and Beggary; and even the probate of a Will must now cost as many *Pounds* perhaps as it did *Shillings* heretofore; nor could a small Volume contain the other Illegalities done by these *Horse-leeches* in the two or three Years that they had been a sucking of us; and what Laws they made, it was as impossible for us to know; as dangerous for us to break; but we shall leave the Men of *Ipswich* and of *Plimouth* (among others) [*He would neither suffer them to be printed, nor fairly published*] to tell the story of the kindness which has been shown them upon this account. Doubtless a Land so ruled as once *New England* was, has not without many tears and sighs beheld the wicked Walking on every side, and the vilest Men exalted.

§. VI. It was now plainly affirmed; both by some in open Counsel, and by some in private converse, that the people of *New England* were all Slaves, and the only difference between them and *Slaves* is their not being bought and sold; and it was a maxim delivered in open Court unto us by one of the Council, *that we must not think the Priviledges of English men would follow us to the end of the world*: Accordingly we have been treated with multiplied contradictions to *Magna Charta*, the rights of which we laid claim unto. Persons who did but peaceably object against the raising of Taxes without an Assembly, have been for it fined, some twenty, some thirty, and others fifty Pounds. Packt and picke Juries have been very common things among us, when under a pretended form of Law, the trouble of such honest and worthy Men has been aimed at, but when some of this Gang have been brought upon the Stage, for the most detestable Enormities that ever the Sun beheld, all Men have with Admiration seen what Methods have been taken, that they might not be treated according to their Crimes. Without Verdict, yea, without a Jury sometimes have People been fined most unrighteously; and some not of the meanest Quality have been kept in long and close Imprisonment without any the least Information appearing against them, or an *Habeas Corpus* allowed unto them. In short, when our Oppressors have been a little out of Money, 'twas but pretending some Offence to be enquired into, and the most innocent Man were continually put into no small Expence to answer the Demands

of

of the Officers, who must have Mony of them, or a Prison for them, tho none could accuse them of any Misdemeanour.

§. VII. To plunge the poor People every where into deeper Incapacities, there was one very comprehensive Abuse given to us; Multitudes of pious and sober Men through the Land, scrupled the Mode of Swearing on the Book, desiring that they might Swear with an uplifted Hand, agreeable to the ancient Custom of the Colony; and though we think we can prove that the Common Law amongst us (as well as in some other places under the *English Crown*) not only indulges, but even commands and enjoins the Rite of lifting the Hand in *Swearing*; yet they that had this Doubt, were still put by from serving upon any Juries; and many of them were most unaccountably Fined and Imprisoned. Thus one Grievance is a *Trojan-Horse*, in the Belly of which it is not easy to account, how many insufferable Vexations have been contained.

§. VIII. Because these things could not make us miserable fast enough, there was a notable Discovery made of we know not what *flaw* in all our *Titles to our Lands*; and tho *besides* our purchase of them from the Natives; and, *besides* our actual and peaceable unquestioned possession of them for near threescore Years, and besides the Promise of K. *Charles* II. in his *Proclamation* sent over to us in the Year 1683. That *no man here shall receive any Prejudice in his Free-hold or Estate*; We had the Grant of our Lands, under the Seal of the *Council* of *Plimouth*: which Grant was Renewed and Confirmed unto us by King *Charles* I. under the Great Seal of *England*; and the *General Court* which consisted of the Patentees and their Associates, had made particular Grants hereof to the several *Towns* (though 'twas now deny'd by the Governour, that there was any such Thing as a *Town*) among us; to all which Grants the *General Court* annexed for the further securing of them, *A General Act*, published under the Seal of the Colony, in the Year 1684. Yet we were every day told, *That no Man was owner of a Foot of Land in all the Colony.* Accordingly, *writs of Intrusion* began every where to be served on People, that after all their Sweat and their Cost upon their formerly purchased Lands, thought themselves *Free-holders* of what they had. And the Governour caused the Lands pertaining to these and those *particular Men*, to be measured out for his Creatures to take possession of; and the *Right Owners*, for pulling up the Stakes, have passed through Molestations enough to tire all the patience in the World. They are more than a few, that were by Terrors driven to take *Patents* for their Lands at excessive rates, to save them from the next that might petition for them: and we fear that the forcing of the People at the *Eastward* hereunto, gave too much Rise to the late unhappy Invasion made by the *Indians* on them. *Blanck Patents* were got ready for the rest of us, to be sold at a Price, that all the Mony and Moveables in the Territory could scarce have paid. And several *Towns* in the Country had their *Commons* begg'd by Persons (even by some of the Council themselves) who have been privately encouraged thereunto, by those that sought for Occasions to impoverish a Land already *Peeled, Meeted out and Trodden down.*

§ IX All the Council were not ingaged in these ill Actions, but those of them which were true Lovers *of their Country*, were seldom admitted to, and seldomer consulted at the Debates, which produced these unrighteous Things: Care was taken to keep them under Disadvantages; and the Governor, with five or six more, did what they would. We bore all these, and many more such Things, without making any attempt for any Relief; only Mr. *Mather*, purely out of respect unto the Good of his Afflicted Country, undertook a Voyage into *England*; which when these Men suspected him to be preparing for, they used all manner of Craft and Rage, not only to interrupt his *Voyage*, but

but to ruin his *Person* too. God having through many Difficulties given him to arrive at *White-hall*, the King, more than once or twice, promised him a certain *Magna Charta*, for a speedy Redress of many things which we were groaning under: and in the mean time said, *That our Governor should be written unto, to forbear the Measures that he was upon.* However, after this, we were injured in those very Things, which were complained of; and besides what Wrong hath been done in our Civil Concerns, we suppose the *Ministers*, and the *Churches* every where have seen our Sacred Concerns apace going after them: How they have been Discountenanced, has had a room in the reflections of every man, that is not a Stranger in our Streets.

§. X. And yet that our Calamity might not be terminated here, we are again Brier'd in the Perplexities of another *Indian war*, how, or why, is a mystery too deep for us to unfold. And tho' 'tis judged that our *Indian* Enemies are not above 100. in number, yet an Army of *One thousand* English hath been raised for the Conquering of them; which Army of our poor Friends and Brethren now under *Popish Commanders* (for in the Army as well as in the Council, *Papists* are in Commission) has been under such a conduct, that not one *Indian* hath been kill'd, but more English are supposed to have died through sickness and hardship, than we have adversaries there alive; and the whole War hath been so managed, that we cannot but suspect in it, a branch of the Plot *to bring us low*; which we leave to be further enquir'd into in due time.

§. XI. We did nothing against these Proceedings, but only cry to our God; they *have caused the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he hears the afflicted.* We have been quiet hitherto, and so still we should have been, had not the great God at this time laid us under a *double engagement* to do something for our Security: besides, what we have in the strangely unanimous inclination, which our Countreymen by extreamest necessities are driven unto. For first, we are informed that the rest of the English *America* is Alarmed with just and great Fears, that they may be attacqu'd by the *French*, who have lately ['tis said] already Treated many of the English with worse than *Turkish* Cruelties; and while we are in equal danger of being surpriz'd by them, it is high time we should be better guarded, than we are like to be while the Government remains in the hands by which it hath been held of late. Moreover, we have understood, [though the *Governour* has taken all imaginable care to keep us all ignorant thereof] that the Almighty God hath been pleased to prosper the noble undertaking of the Prince of *Orange*, to preserve the three Kingdoms from the horrible brinks of Popery and Slavery and to bring to a condign punishment those *worst of men*, by whom *English Liberties* have been destroyed; in compliance with which Glorious Action, we ought surely to follow the Patterns, which the Nobility, Gentry and Commonalty in several parts of those Kingdoms have set before us, though *they* therein chiefly proposed to prevent what *we* already endure.

§. XII. We do therefore seize upon the Persons of those few *Ill Men* which have been [next to our Sins] the grand Authors of our Miseries; resolving to secure them, for what Justice, Orders from his Highness, with the *English Parliament* shall direct, lest, ere we are aware, we find [what we may *fear*, being on all sides in danger] our selves to be by them given away to a Forreign *Power*, before such Orders can reach unto us; for which Orders we now humbly wait. In the mean time firmly believing, that we have endeavoured nothing but what meer Duty to God and our *Country* calls for at our Hands: We commit our *Enterprise* unto the Blessing of Him, *who hears the cry*

of

of the oppreſſed, and adviſe all our Neighbours, for whom we have thus ventured our ſelves, to joyn with us in Prayers and all juſt Actions, for the Defence of the Land.

At the Town-Houſe *in* Boſton, April 18. 1689.

SIR,

Our ſelves and many other the Inhabitants of this Town, and the places adjacent, being ſurprized with the peoples ſudden taking of Arms; in the firſt motion whereof we were wholly ignorant, being driven by the preſent accident, are neceſſitated to acquaint your Excellency, that for the quieting and ſecuring of the people inhabiting in this Country, from the imminent Dangers they many wayes ly open and expoſed unto, and tendring your own Safety, we judge it neceſſary you forthwith ſurrender and deliver up the Government and Fortification to be preſerved and diſpoſed according to Order and Direction from the Crown of England, *which ſuddenly is expected may arrive; promiſing all Security from violence to your Self, or any of your Gentlemen or Soldiers in Perſon and Eſtate: Otherwiſe we are aſſured they will endeavour the taking of the Fortification by Storm, if any Oppoſition be made.*

To Sir Edmond Androſs *Kt.*

Waite Winthrop.
Simon Bradſtreet.
William Stoughton.
Samuel Shrimpton.
Bartholomew Gidney.
William Brown.
Thomas Dantforth.
John Richards.
Eliſha Cook.
Iſaac Addington.
John Nelſon.
Adam Winthrop.
Peter Sergeant.
John Foſter.
David Waterhouſe.

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